

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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USMISSION USUN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0224

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, SF, RH, WA

SUBJ: SAG VIEWS ON KEY ISSUES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

1. SUMMARY. IN MARCH 3 CONVERSATION WITH SOUTH AFRICAN SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BRAND FOURIE, CHARGE SOUGHT FOURIE'S VIEWS ON SEVERAL CURRENT ISSUES. FOURIE PROVIDED LITTLE HARD INFORMATION ON ANGOLA BUT REPEATED SAG CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUING REFUGEE SITUATION FROM WHICH IT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY LIKE TO DISENGAGE. HE CLAIMED NO OPTIMISM ON RHODESIA AND AGREED THAT MACHEL SEEMED TO BE ABANDONING EARLIER CAUTION ABOUT SANCTIONS (SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED BY MACHEL SPEECH). HE SAID NOTHING NEW ON NAMIBIA BUT PROMISED TO LOOK INTO SAG REFUSAL OF PASSPORTS FOR TWO NAMIBIAN IV NOMINEES. END SUMMARY.

2. ANGOLA: ASKED WHEHTER HE SAW ANY ASSURANCES OR THREATS FOR SA IN ANY OF MPLA PRESIDENT NETO'S RECENT STATEMENTS, FOURIE REMARKED SCORNFULLY THAT "THESE PEOPLE" SAY SO MANY DIFFERENT THINGS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ASSESS THEIR MEANING. HE DUCKED QUESTION OF WHETHER SAG HAD ANY CONTACTS, DIRECT OR INDIRECT, WITH MPLA, SAYING HE SHOULD PERHAPS ASK

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SAME THING ABOUT USG, HINTING THAT US SOURCES MIGHT BE

BETTER INFORMED ABOUT SUCH THINGS THAN HE WAS.

3. ANGOLAN REFUGEES: HE SAID THAT EVACUATION TO PORTUGAL OF PORTUGUESE REFUGEES WHO ELIGIBLE AND WILLING TO GO WAS PROCEEDING WELL. ABOUT 6,000 REFUGEES BEING MOVED AT RATE OF 500 OR 600 A DAY, AND JOB SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THIS WEEKEND OR EARLY NEXT WEEK. SOME 5,000 OR 6,000 WILL REMAIN, POSSIBLY CONSOLIDATED INTO TWO CAMPS FROM EXISTING FOUR (FOURIE WAS UNSURE), INCLUDING SEVERAL HUNDRED PORTUGUESE WHITES OR MULATTOS WHO DID NOT WANT TO GO TO PORTUGAL OR RETURN TO HOMES IN ANGOLA BUT HAD SIMPLY ATTACHED THEMSELVES TO SA FORCES AND ASSUMED THEY COULD LEAVE WITH THE TROOPS. FOURIE ASSERTED BITTERLY THAT ASIDE FROM SAG AND ICRC NO ONE AT ALL HAD SHOWN ANY CONCERN FOR WELFARE OF THESE PEOPLE OR FOR POSSIBILITY THEY MIGHT BE SLAUGHTERED IF LEFT WITHOUT PROTECTION. SAG MIGHT EVENTUALLY HAVE TO CEASE ADMINISTERING THE CAMPS AND COULD NOT ALLOW REMAINING REFUGEES TO ENTER SWA EVEN IF FORCE HAD TO BE USED TO KEEP THEM OUT. HE SAID HE HAD HEARD THAT MPLA HAD REQUESTED UNHCR ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES BUT WAS UNAWARE WHETHER AID WAS OUGHT FOR REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA. HE SAID SAG WOULD WELCOME ANY INFORMATION WE MIGHT HAVE ON THIS POINT.

4. RHODESIA: SAG HAD NOT BEEN BRIEFED ON RESULTS OF LORD GREENHILL VISIT AND HAD NO DETAILS FROM RHODESIA ON WHICH TO BASE CURRENT ASSESSMENT, BUT FOURIE ADMITTED HE WAS NOT REPEAT NOT VERY OPTIMISTIC. REGARDING PRESS REPORTS THAT HINT OF SOME NEW SMITH PROPOSALS TO NKOMO, FOURIE COMMENTED THAT NEWSPAPERS WERE ALWAYS INCLINED TO PORTRAY SITUATION AS MUCH BETTER OR MUCH WORSE THAN IT WAS AND IMPLIED THAT SAG UNAWARE OF ANY SIGNIFICANT NEW PROPOSALS BY SMITH. HE AGREED THAT MOZAMBIQUE'S PRESIDENT MACHEL SEEMED TO BE MOVING AWAY FROM HIS EARLIER CAUTION TOWARD RHODESIA AND MIGHT IN FACT BE SERIOUSLY CONTEMPLATING APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS. (CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE JUST MINUTES BEFORE NOONTIME BROADCAST OF NEWS ABOUT MACHEL'S LATEST SPEECH ANNOUNCING CLOSURE OF BORDER AND APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA.) FOURIE NOTED THAT PM VORSTER HAD BEEN VERY FRANK IN LETTING RHODESIANS KNOW HIS ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION AND THAT SMITH SHOULD NOT COUNT ON SA TO JUMP TO

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RHODESIA'S AID IF SETTLEMENT NEGOTIATIONS FAILED. DESPITE PESSIMISTIC OUTLOOK, FOURIE EVADED AS TOO HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION OF WHETHER SAG HAS GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO CONTINGENCY PLANS IN CASE OF SERIOUS WORSENING OF SITUATION IN RHODESIA.

5. NAMIBIA: FOURIE THOUGHT JUST-RESUMED SESSION OF CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE IN WINDHOEK WOULD PROBABLY PRODUCE SOME IDEA OF WHEN CONFERENCE WOULD GET INTO CONSTITUTIONAL

PHASE OF ITS WORK. HE NOTED THAT CHIEF KAPUUO REPORTEDLY INTENDED PUT SOME CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS FORWARD AND, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, THOUGHT THERE MIGHT BE SOME DISCUSSION OF WIDENING THE REPRESENTATION OF DIFFERENT GROUPS AT THE CONFERENCE. ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS OF PASSPORTS BEING GRANTED FOR TRAVEL TO US OF IV NOMINEES KAMEETA AND TJONGARERA, WHOSE PREVIOUS PASSPORT APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN REFUSED, FOURIE ASSERTED THAT PASSPORTS MIGHT BE REFUSED FOR SECURITY BUT NOT FOR "POLITICAL" RASONS AND PROMISED TO LOOK INTO SITUATION.

6. COMMENT: FOURIE WAS NOT FORTHCOMING IN DISCUSSING ANGOLAN SITUATION EXCEPT TO EXPRESS FRUSTRATION AT CONTINUING PROBLEM SAG SEES IN DEALING WITH REFUGEE SITUATION. HE GAVE IMPRESSION OF GENUINELY WANTING DISENGAGEMENT FOR REFUGEE PROBLEM WITHOUT ABANDONING REFUGEES TO ADVANCE OF POTENTIALLY REVENGEFUL MPLA OR PERMITTING THEM TO FLEE INTO NAMIBIA. HIS LACK OF OPTIMISM ABOUT RHODESIA SEEMED REINFORCED BY APPARENT HARDENING OF MOZAMBIKAN ATTITUDE, ALTHOUGH HE GAVE NO INDICATION OF HAVING EXAMINED WHAT ALTERNATIVES RHODESIA AND SAG MAYA HAVE TO FACE IF SITUATION RAPIDLY WORSENS. MEANWHILE, NAMIBIAN CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE SEEMS TO PROCEED WITH BUSINESS AS USUAL WITH LITTLE SIGN AT PRESENT TO INDICATE WHETHER IT MAY RECEIVE MORE, OR LESS, ATTENTION AS RESULT OF INCREASING UNCERTAINTIES IN ANGOLA AND RHODESIA.
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